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EMERGING TREND, OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND CREATING AWARENESS FOR GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Keeping our environment safe is one of the biggest needs of the time today. Environmental issues across the globe have gained prominence in both business and public life as well. Businesses have certainly begun to modify their behaviour in an attempt to address society's "new concerns" as society becomes more concerned with the natural environment. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like waste minimization eco-friendly products and environmental management systems and also have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. In the modern market green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed prominent importance and also has emerged as an important concept in India as in other parts of the developed and developing countries and also seen as an important strategy of facilitating sustainable development. Analyzing the need of environment protection as a vital and necessity component for their long term objectives in business many enterprises today are marketing sustainable products and services and also by promoting co-efficient production activities are termed green businesses. Green products may be defined as products or services that which have a lesser or reduced bad effect on human health and also the environment when compared with services or competing products that serve the same purpose. Green business surely is an enterprise that has no negative effect on economy, environment, society and community. It certainly also meets the triple bottom line such as natural world betterment and social advantages for employees and members of the local community, financial benefits of the company. Green business today is practically existent everywhere around us. Companies such as General Electric and Wal-Mart are transforming their business practices into green ones. Many of the companies are working on the development of green marketing which in turn has opened the door of opportunities in terms of co-branding their products into separate line. In the wake of global warming the present paper identifies three particular segments of green consumers and also explores opportunities and challenges businesses have with green marketing. The paper also examines the present trends of green marketing in India and also describes the reasons as to why companies are trying to adopt it. Present article focuses on various organizations or the corporate that are actually taking the initiative needed to keep our environment free from harmful pollutants. In order to tap the market opportunities in the marketplace many organizations today are adopting green marketing technologies which emphasizes on the fact that there is a future of green marketing in India. Paper also focuses some of the problems with green marketing and concludes on the note that green marketing is something that will continuously grow in both practice and demand in the near future ahead.

KEYWORDS: Green Marketing, Green Business, Green Products, Triple Bottom Line, Environmental Issues, Eco-Friendly & Local Community

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INTRODUCTION

To contribute much to biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation for the communities that which live in high biodiversity areas majority of the development oriented and conservation professionals are necessarily

increasingly incorporating conservation products into their portfolio of activities. In recent years to promote biodiversity conservation tremendous progress has been made in involving the local communities in ethical and good conservation practices, developing and sustaining those enterprises that which are sustainable and which are also generating income for the firm. In common parlance Green marketing refers to the process of selling products and services based on their environmental benefits. Indeed such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in it or produced and packaged in an environmentally friendly way. "Green marketing involves promoting and developing products and services that which satisfy customer's wants and demands for quality, performance, convenience and affordable pricing without having a detrimental input on the environment. Green business produces green products. Green business should necessarily consider the strategies like water conservation, solid waste reduction and recycling, energy conservation, prevention of pollution etc. Green consumers are those consumers who choose to purchase environmentally friendly products. The development and promotion of green products whether in the context of human resources, operation management or marketing requires new

Ideas while dealing with added constraints of environmental and consumer pressures. However, the activities of green products necessarily incorporate recycling content, renewable resources, local resources and manufactures; employ sustainable harvesting practices like wood or biobased, bio-degradable, easily reused either whole or through dissembling, be able to readily recycle without significant deterioration of quality. Environmental marketing and ecological marketing are other similar terms used for green marketing. Green jobs can be defined as activities that which contribute substantially to preserve environmental quality. These jobs are electricians, plumbers, general workers, environmental specialist etc. Some of the other sectors of economy like sustainable agriculture, energy efficiency, transportation, renewable energy etc can create new green jobs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Green Marketing term came into prominence in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Back in 1980's the first wave of green marketing occurred. Major milestone for first and foremost wave of green marketing came in the form of published books named green marketing. The word was coined by **Ken Pattie** (1992) in the United Kingdom and by **Jacquelyn ottoman** (1993) in the United States. According to the American marketing Association (AMA) marketing of those products that are presumed to be environmentally safe are termed as Green marketing. Thus in general green marketing necessarily incorporates a broad of range of activities including product modification, packaging changes, changes to the production done and also advertising. As such one finds it difficult to define green marketing as various meanings do contradict and intersect with each other. To cite an example, in recent years various social, environmental and retail definitions have attached to this term. Environmental marketing and ecological marketing are other similar terms used in line with green marketing. Thus in a holistic approach green marketing is certainly defined as the concept where in the production, marketing of products and services which are presumed to be environmental safe and in a manner which is less detrimental or degradable to the environment with growing awareness about implications of global warming and also such calamities that which might occur due to non-biodegradable solid wastes, environmental disturbance and harmful impacts of pollution etc where both consumers and marketers are becoming increasingly sensitive. In the short term, while the shift to green may appear to be expensive, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous cost as well as wise too in the long run. Thus eco marketing and Green environment are part of the new marketing approaches which do not just adjust or enhance, refocus on existing marketing thinking and practice but also seek to challenge those approaches and

provide a substantially a different perspective. Precisely, green, environmental and eco-marketing belong to group of approaches which seek to address the lack of fit between marketing as it is currently practiced and also the social and ecological realities of the wider marketing environment. **Kilbourne,** W.E. (1998) in the paper titled "**Green Marketing: a Theoretical Perspective**" has opined that the failure of green marketing vests on the notion of its incapability to move beyond the limitations of presently prevailing paradigm, hence remaining far on the periphery of the discipline. **McDaniel, S.W. & Rylander, D.H.** (1993**)** in the article titled **"Strategic Green Marketing"** stated that, one of the key business strategies of the future is taking shape in the form of green marketing. However increased environmental consciousness and sustainable development foresight makes it incumbent on both consumers and marketers not just to respond only to it but also to lead the way in and associate themselves with environmental programs. Products environmental implications should be recognized and identified by marketers who provide products and services to consumers, they should also analyze the changing consumer and political attitudes while recognizing and identifying the role companies can play in preserving and conserving the environment. **Peattie K (2001)** in his article entitled "Golden goose or wild goose? The hunt for the green consumer, business strategy and environment" analyzed that the central theme or character in development of green marketing is identifying the nature of green consumer, as various businesses attempts to respond and understand to external pressures to enhance environmental performance. Besides academicians and marketing practitioners are attempting to understand as well as identify green consumers and their needs and also develop market offerings that which meet these needs. **Rosenberger, Polonsky & Ottman, J (1998)** in their paper entitled "Developing green products: Learning from stakeholders" discussed research which focused on US and Australian markets, attitude and perception of stakeholders, potential of stakeholders to influence green new product development (NPD) process and also certain strategies which can be used to involve stakeholders in this process. The findings of the article also suggested that marketers believe that some stakeholders with "high" influencing abilities should necessarily be involved in green new product development process, even though it appears in practice that firms use very basic methods to include stakeholders.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the major challenges in Green marketing
- To study the 4P's of green marketing
- To know the Golden rules of Green Marketing
- To know the possible reasons adopted by firms to promote Green marketing
- To analyze some of the major green marketing cases in India
- To conduct a SWOT analysis on Green Marketing

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN GREEN MARKETING

Some of the Major Challenges in Green Marketing are as Follows

- **Need for Standardization:** It is found out by recent studies that only 5% of the marketing messages from "Green Campaigns" are entirely true and reliable and there is a lack of standardization to authenticate these claims. To certify the product as organic, there is no standardization currently in place. There will not be any verifiable means also unless some regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certifications. A standard quality control board certainly needs to be in place for such labeling and licensing.

- **Totally a New Concept:** Today Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more awareness about the merits of green products. But it is still a very new concept for the masses. Environmental threats certainly need to be educated and made aware to the consumers. Lot of effort and time as well is needed to reach the masses and make them aware of new green movements. The value and importance of using natural and herbal beauty products are appreciated by Indian consumers by India's ayurvedic heritage. Healthy living lifestyles such as Natural food consumption and performing yoga regularly have become daily routine of Indian consumer. Keeping all these aspects in mind consumer is already aware and also will be inclined to appreciate and accept green products.
- **Patience and Perseverance:** The need of the hour is to view environment as a major long-term investment opportunity, which the investors and corporate structures need to understand. Also the marketers and marketing intermediaries need to look at the long term benefits from this new green movement. It will surely require a lot of patience and also no immediate results. It will also have its own acceptance period since it is a new concept and idea to be implemented strongly.
- **Avoiding Green Myopia:** Focusing on customer benefits and needs is the first rule of green marketing and it is also the primary reason as to why consumers buy certain products in the first place. Doing things rightly and also motivating consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative is a much important rule to be imposed. However if customer satisfaction level criteria is not met then it is not going to help in any way even if the product developed is absolutely green in various aspects. This will in later stages lead to green myopia. Also if the green products are priced very high than again there is a chance that it might lose its market acceptability.

Some other Challenges Ahead in Green Marketing are as Follows

- Green products require recyclable and renewable material which is costly
- Green products requires a sophisticated technology, which requires huge investments in research and development
- Water treatment technology for green products, which is too costly for small companies to afford
- Majority of the people are not aware of green products and also its uses
- Majority of the consumers are not all willing to pay a premium for green products

4P's of Green Marketing

Like conventional marketers, green marketers must also address the four P's in innovative ways:

Product

The entrepreneurs wanting to exploit emerging green market should certainly take into consideration the following points:

- Customers environmental needs to be identified and also develop the products to address these similar needs
- Develop environmentally responsible and sustainable products to have less impact than competitors

Those Varieties of Products which are Increasingly Available in the Market and Also Support Sustainable Development which are Good for Triple Bottom Line Include

- Those products which are made from recycled goods
- Recyclable or reusable products
- Efficiency oriented products which save money, water, energy or gasoline and also reduce environmental impact
- Proper labeling and packaging of products which are presumed to be environmentally responsible. Mc Donald's for instance remodified their packaging from polystyrene clamshells to paper
- Products essentially with green labels as long as they offer substantiation
- Certified products, which exceed or meet environmentally responsible criteria

Thus whatever may be the product or service it is very much vital to ensure that products meet or exceed the quality expectations of customers and are also thoroughly tested.

- **Price:** One of the critical elements of marketing mix is pricing. Customers prefer to pay a premium if there generates a perception of additional product value in their minds. The value can be in terms of visual appeal, improved performance, taste or functional design. By far environmental benefits are added bonus but quite often they act as deciding factor between products of equal and value. However when product life cycle costs are taken into consideration environmentally responsible products is often presumed to be less expensive. For example: Fuel efficient vehicles, non hazardous products and fuel efficient vehicles.
- **Place:** Significance of impact on the customers a company attracts relies on the choice on when and where to make a product available to them. At least very few customers will go out of their routine way to buy green products merely for the sake of being environmental conscious. To successfully introduce new green products into the market marketers should, in most of the cases position their products broadly in the marketplace so that they are not just appealing to a small green niche market. The location must however be consistent with the image the company wants to project and also should allow the company to project its own image rather than being dominated or compromised by the image. The company should also differentiate itself from its competitors by its location. This can be achieved more or less by visually appealing displays and in-store promotions or using recycled materials to emphasize the environmental and other related benefits.
- **Promotion:** Products and services which are promoted to target markets include public relations, direct marketing, advertising, sales promotions and on site promotions. Reinforcing environmental credibility by using sustainable marketing and communication practices and tools is practiced by smart green marketers today. For instance, majority of the companies in the financial sector today are providing electronic statements by e-mail and e-marketing is also rapidly replacing more traditional marketing practices and printed materials can be produced using various recycled materials and other efficient processes such as waterless printing can be inculcated. Today retailers when promoting their environmental commitment are recognizing the value of alliances with other companies, research organizations and environmental groups. To reduce the use of plastic bags and also to promote their green commitment, some retailers do sell shopping bags. A classic example would be bags produced by Land care Australia, Clean up Australia and Planet Arc under the banner of the Go Green

environment fund. Certainly credibility is the key to successful green marketing. Environmental claims should not be overstated or establishing unrealistic expectations as well as communicating simply through sources that people trust should not be done by industries. Companies should promote their green credentials and achievements. Publicize stories of employee's and companies green initiatives. Stakeholders and customers should be entitled with environmental award programs to profile environmental credentials.

GOLDEN RULES OF GREEN MARKETING

Some of the Major Golden Rules of Green Marketing are as Follows

- **Know Your Customer:** If a company wants to sell a greener product to consumer then it should make sure that the consumer is aware of and also is concerned about the issues that company product attempts to address
- **Empower Consumers:** Companies should make sure that consumers feel by themselves or are in connection with all the other users of its product that which can make a difference. This is called as empowerment and it is also the main reason why consumer go ahead and buy greener products
- **Being Transparent:** Consumers must certainly believe in the legitimacy of company's product and also the specific claims it is making. The rest of the company's business policies are consistent with whatever the company is doing is environmentally friendly
- **Reassure the Buyer:** Consumers must be made to trust and believe that the product performs the job it is supposed to do and they won't forgo product quality also in the name of the environment
- **Consider Company's Pricing:** If suppose the company is charging a premium for the consumers product and preferable products which are favoring environment cost more due to economies of scale and use of higher quality ingredients then company should assure that consumer can afford premium and also feel that it's worth it. Majority of the consumers are not in a position to afford the premiums for any type of products these days which are much less greener ones so companies develop target audience and product specifications while keeping this in mind.

Possible Reasons Adopted by Firms to Promote Green Marketing

The concept of green marketing has been widely accepted and adopted by firms worldwide today and some of the major possible reasons which are cited for wide adoption of green marketing as follows:

- **Opportunities:** As demand increases and changes many well established firms see these changes as an opportunity to exploit and also have a competitive advantage over other firms marketing none environmentally responsible alternatives. Some of the famous examples
 - Surf excel detergent which saves water (advertised with the message –"do bucket paani roz bachana")
 - Energy saving LG consumer durables as examples of green marketing
 - Green buildings which are much more efficient in their use of energy, water and other construction materials which reduce the impact on human health and also the environment through better design, construction, operation, water disposal and maintenance. In India the green building movement, spearheaded by the confederation of Indian Industry (CII) – Godrej green business

- A high quality recycled photocopier was introduced by Xerox in an attempt to satisfy the demands of organizations for less environmentally harmful products

- **Government Pressure:** Governments want to "protect" consumer and society as with all marketing related activities and this protection indeed has important green marketing implications. To protect consumer rights in several ways, government regulations which are relating to environmental marketing are designed which reduce promotion of harmful goods or by-products thus modifying industry and consumer use as well as consumption of harmful goods. Designed to control the amount of hazardous wastes produced by various firms' government has established certain regulations. New Delhi, Capital of India was gradually polluted at a very rapid pace until Supreme Court of India forced a change of fuel on vehicles moving in and around the city. A directive in this regard was issued in 2002, to completely adopt CNG in all public transport vehicles to combat pollution in the city. Establishment of guidelines designed to 'control' green marketing claims is one of the more recent publicized environmental regulations which is undertaken by governments recently.

- **Competitive Pressures:** A major desire to maintain their competitive position is another important force in the environmental marketing area for many firms. Most of the organizations keenly observe their competitors promoting their environmental behaviors and also try to emulate this kind of behaviour. In some cases this type of competitive pressure has caused entire industry to modify and also reduce its detrimental environmental behaviour.

Social Responsibility

Behaving in an environmentally responsible fashion is one of the major tasks of firms today and many organizations are beginning to realize that they are members of wider community. Companies however realize and believe that they must achieve the environmental objectives and also profit related objectives. Environmental issues being integrated in to firm's corporate culture in later stages.

Analysis of some of the Major Green marketing Cases in India

More than anything else, green marketing as of today continues to be an issue of major global interest. Green marketing searches originated from India than from any other country in the world on a relative basis was said by Google trends report recently. For capturing market opportunity many companies today are adopting green marketing practices.

Some of the major green marketing cases in India are as follows:

State Bank of India- Best Green IT Project: Green IT@SBI

SBI the banking giant has saved power costs and also earned carbon credits by using eco and power friendly equipment in its 10,000 new ATM's and also has set the right example for other banks to follow. SBI entered into green service known as Green channel counter. Many services are provided by SBI like no checks, no deposit slip, paper less banking, no withdrawal form, no money transactions from all these transaction are done through ATM cards and SBI shopping. To reduce emissions State Bank of India turned to wind energy. State Bank of India became first Indian bank to harness wind energy through a 15 megawatt wind farm developed by Suzlon energy. The wind farm each with a capacity of 1.5MW uses 10 Suzlon wind turbines which is located near Coimbatore and is spread across three states- Maharashtra with 9MW, Tamil Nadu with 4.5 MW and Gujarat with 1.5MW. As part of State Bank of India's green banking program

the wind project was set up this was dedicated to the reduction of carbon footprint and also promotion of energy efficient processes, especially among bank clients.

Lead Free Paints from Kansai Nerolac Kansai

As a responsible corporate Kansai Nerolac Paints Ltd has committed itself to welfare of society and environment pertaining to the areas of education, health, environment preservation and community development. It has been constantly working on removing hazardous heavy metal from its paints. Some of the heavy hazardous metals like mercury, lead, antimony, arsenic and chromium can have adverse effects on humans. Paints which contain lead can cause damage and adverse ill effects to human health which especially might pose danger to kidney, nervous system and reproductive system. Lead poisoning normally attacks children who are prone to memory loss and lower intelligence levels.

ITC Limited

By introducing 'ozone treated elemental chlorine free' bleaching technology for the very first time in India ITC strengthened their commitment to green technologies. This however resulted in an entire new range of top green products and solutions: an environmental friendly multi-purpose paper which is less polluting when compared to its traditional counterpart.

Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited (TNPL)

TNPL was awarded the Green Business Leadership award in the pulp and paper sector which is adjusted as the best performer in 2009-2010. Two clean development mechanism projects and a wind farm project which has helped to generate 2,30,323 carbon emission reductions earning Rs. 17.40 crore are the major initiatives undertaken by this top green firm in India.

HCL Technologies

It IT major is by far considered as the icon of Indian green initiatives, in solving the problem of e-waste and toxics in electronics industry the IT major has taken "go green" steps. The organization is committed to phasing out Brominated flame retardants and hazardous vinyl plastic and also has called for a restriction on hazardous substances (RoHS) legislation in India.

Oil and Natural Gas Company (ONGC)

ONGC, India's largest oil producer with its energy efficient, green crematoriums which will soon replace traditional wooden pyre across the country is all set to lead the list of top 10 green Indian companies. ONGC's Mokshada green cremation initiative currently saves around 60 to 70% of wood and also one fourth of burning time per cremation.

Hero Honda Motors

One of the largest two- wheeler manufacturers in India who are equally responsible and have contributed much towards green marketing thus emerging as top green firm in India is Hero Honda Motors. In striking the right balance between mankind, business and nature the company's philosophy of continuous innovation in green products and solutions has played a key role.

Wipro's Green machines (In India Only)

Probably India's first company to launch environment friendly computer peripherals is Wipro Infotech. For Indian

market, Wipro has launched new range of palmtops, laptops and desktops called as Wipro Green ware. The products are mainly RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) complaint thus reducing the e-wastage in the surrounding environment.

McDonald's Green Revolution

Because of increased consumer concern McDonald's replaced its calm shell packaging with waxed paper relating to polystyrene production which causes ozone depletion. The restaurants bags, napkins are all made up of recycled paper

SWOT Analysis on Green Marketing

As in the formulation of a green strategy, a firm may certainly evolve it from a SWOT analysis w.r.t environmental audit. A SWOT analysis of Green marketing can be shown below as follows:

Strengths

- Marketers can certainly get access to new markets and they can also gain advantage over the competitors who are not focusing on green marketing strategies
- Marketers can also charge a premium on the products that which are seen as more eco- responsible
- Those organizations that which adopt green marketing are perceived to be more socially responsible
- Green marketing wins brand loyalty among customers and also builds brand equity. Example: Research and development capabilities for clean processes and green products and human resources are all committed to environmental protection

Weakness

- Before caring for the environment and having a concern towards nature most customers choose to satisfy their personal need
- Overemphasizing the greenness rather than giving importance and addressing customer needs can prove devastating for a product
- Majority of the customers don't prefer those products which as labeled to be Green as they presume such labeling as a marketing gimmick and they might also lose trust in an institution that which suddenly claims to be green. For instance products that which cannot be recycled and also hazardous wastes of a company

Opportunities

- Company should market its products to those segments which are becoming more concerned about environment and are aware of environmental hazards. Besides customers also prefer and demand those products that which conform to new attitudes.
- Green marketing is perceived to be a competitive advantage for many organizations today, relative to that of competitors. Hence firms strive to improve upon their social awareness. Consumer's socially conscious behaviour will be complemented and increased if companies adopt green marketing strategies which can also give them an advantage over competitors who do not address these issues. For instance, offering environmental friendly products, saving sustainable resources and relating them.

Threats

- Uncertainty always lingers based on the present activities which hinders environmental impact, which is generally perceived to be less environmentally harmful
- There is always an uncertainty in choosing the kind of green marketing activities which are acceptable from a government perspective
- Based on existing green marketing claims, there is a possibility of a backlash from consumers or government
- E.g. competitors gain market shares with green products and increased environmental regulations).

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR GOING FOR GREEN MARKETING

A lot of research needs to be done on green marketing as still it is in state of infancy and strategies should be worked in order to explore its potential. Some of the suggestions should be implemented by organizations for catering to the challenges of green marketing and also successful exploitation of green marketing. These are: The merits of green products need to be made aware to the consumers. For majority of the masses it is still a new concept and as such the consumer needs to be educated and also made aware of the environmental threats. The organization however should also make sure that the consumer is aware and is also concerned about the issues which the product attempts to address. In this regard green advertising and green marketing campaigns are a good step towards it. By making consumer aware of green products company should motivate consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. Company should also ascertain that the green products can make a difference in consumer's behaviour towards purchase. To control false promise and claims by the marketer steps should be taken to maintain legitimacy and trust worthiness of green products. Consumers should be made to believe that product performs the job it's supposed to do as they won't forego product quality in the name of environment. Government however plays a major role for efficient and effective implementation of the concept of green marketing. The concept of green marketing cannot be conceptualized unless government creates specific strict and stringent laws and also utilizes its authority to implement them. Consumers, Government and organizations should work in unison towards common goal of minimizing the detrimental environmental impact of their activities as they can surely save the environment and also make this world a better place to live in and survive. Today's leading brands should recognize and also realize that consumer expectations have changed in recent years. It is not just only enough for a company to go green with its products as consumer expect the products when they purchase and which is pocket friendly that which also helps to reduce the environmental impact in their own lives as well. Today's consumers are becoming socially responsible and are also more conscious about their environment. Besides more institutions should become responsible to consumer's aspirations. As companies eventually move towards becoming green they want to have an early mover advantage. Green marketing as such is very low on the agenda of most businesses and it's also an underleveraged USP (Unique selling proposition). Hence efficient green marketing is targeted towards right audience which can make a difference.

CONCLUSIONS

It is extremely important that green marketing is becoming a norm rather than an exception with the threat of global warming looming large. As such recycling of metals, paper, plastics etc in a safe and environmentally harmless manner which should rather become more universal and systematized. To use energy-efficient lamps and other electrical

goods green products should become the general norm. Globally this is the right time to select green marketing globally. In the world of business to bring drastic changes if all the nations will make strict roles because green marketing is essential to save the world from pollution. From business perspective a clever marketer is one who not only convinces the customer but also actively involves the customer in effectively marketing his product. As compared to non-green products, marketers also have the responsibility to make consumers understand the need and benefits of green products. Consumer definitely will pay more to maintain a cleaner and greener environment in green marketing. In developing countries like India, green marketing is gaining more relevance and importance. Well in this present scenario many corporate giants have taken green products and green marketing as part of their company strategy just to create a strong brand image, brand identity and also to gain attention of the consumers. The need of the hour is more and more companies need to emerge and facilitate the environment. Besides green marketing can also be viewed as a source of new opportunity to excel and grow for companies in today's highly competitive global environment.

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